

VZCZCXRO9095
RR RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHRY #0263/01 1541349
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 021349Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2611
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000263

DOL FOR DIANTHA GARMS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12598: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [GV](#)

SUBJECT: GUINEA: FORCED LABOR AND CHILD LABOR IN THE PRODUCTION OF GOODS

REF State 43120

¶1. (U) SUMMARY. Reftel requests that post report on forced labor and exploitative child labor in the production of goods for a mandatory Congressional reporting request - the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (TVPA). Embassy met with government, labor organizations, and NGOs to gather the requested information on forced labor and exploitative child labor in Guinea.

¶2. (U) Information from various sources suggests that there are incidents of exploitative child labor in diamond and gold mines in Guinea. While there was some indication that exploitative child labor existed in the production of cocoa and cashews, specific details as to the magnitude and frequency were unavailable. As there are few organizations working on forced labor and exploitative child labor in Guinea, further research and study is essential to obtain reliable statistics on all of these products. END SUMMARY

GOLD MINING

¶3. (U) Embassy sources reported that there was exploitative child labor occurring in gold mines in Guinea. Embassy used four sources to corroborate this information: 1) a 2003 report by the Ministry of Social Affairs Office and UNICEF called "National Survey into Child Trafficking in Guinea"; 2) a draft report by UNICEF, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Labor on Child Labor in Guinea; 3) a 2006 study by the Research-Action and Literacy Association (AGRAAD) on "Mining Zones in Bonodou and Dandano"; and 4) an interview with the Save the Children representative in Guinea.

¶4. (U) Sources indicated that gold mines throughout Guinea exploited children under 18 years old, who were used in the mines for extracting, transporting and cleaning the mineral. According to two sources, children working in the gold mines lived in extreme conditions-eating and sleeping together without water and electricity. One source reported that the children lived in miserable health conditions, causing various illnesses including meningitis. Another report explains that the children are not allowed contact with their parents, quoting a child from a mine in Fossy (near Forecariah), "my parents know I'm in Guinea, but there has not been any contact between us since I arrived." Two reports claim children work extremely long hours. One states that two children, one from a mine in Foulayah near Kindia and another from the mine in Fossy, claim working 10-15 hours every day of the week. One source reported working with children that were victims of child trafficking. According to that source, the children were trafficked from other villages in Guinea to work in the gold mines.

¶5. (U) According to Embassy sources, gold mines in Dandano (Sous Prefecture of Kouankan) utilize children to extract, transport, and clean the mineral. The source said there were 100-150 people working at the gold mine, 45% were children ages ranging from 7-16. The study stated that 30% of the children were accompanied by their parents, who were also extracting gold in the mine. The other 70% of the children were independent workers who received very low salaries

for the work. According to the report, the independent workers were compensated based on the quantity of gold they extracted in the day.

The report said that 79% of the children who are responsible for cleaning the mineral are girls, who are often forced to prostitute themselves to make enough money to survive.

¶16. (U) Embassy sources claimed that 300 children were being exploited for child labor in the gold mine in Doko. The report said the children were aged 5 to 16 years old, 96% were Guinean children and 4% were foreigners. Of the Guinean children, 71% were Malinke, 7% were Peul, 3% were Soussou, and 3% were Kognaguis. The study also said that 83% of the children were from villages near the mine and the other 17% were from other areas of Guinea. While the children were mostly girls (69%), there was still a significant percentage of boys (31%) working in the gold mines.

DIAMOND MINING

¶17. (U) Source information suggests that there are incidents of exploitative child labor occurring in diamond mines throughout Guinea. Embassy used two sources to corroborate this information: 1) a 2003 report by the Ministry of Social Affairs Office and UNICEF called "National Survey into Child Trafficking in Guinea"; and 2) a 2006 study by the Research-Action and Literacy Association (AGRAAD) on "Mining Zones in Bonodou and Dandano."

¶18. (U) Sources indicated that diamond mines throughout Guinea exploited children, using them to extract, transport and clean the mineral. According to two sources, children working in the diamond mines work in extreme and dangerous conditions. The sources claim

CONAKRY 00000263 002 OF 002

the children are forced to work long hours without rest until they find diamonds. One source said that the diamond mines are highly susceptible to landslides and many of the victims are children. According to an Embassy source, Bonodou (Sous Prefecture of Kouankan) is a new exploitation zone for diamonds and the mine's workers are 75% women and children, many of which are reportedly also exploited for prostitution.

¶19. (U) Embassy sources did not have information regarding the number of children employed in the diamond mines, the gender and ethnic backgrounds of the children, or length of time children had been in the situation. While there is the potential for certain extreme situations, Embassy did not receive any explicit information about debts arrangements with employers.

OTHER GOODS

¶10. (U) Reftel also requested that Embassy provide information on other goods that have some indication of forced or child labor in their production but do not have enough to report on in this tasking. There was some general indication from the reports that child exploitative labor may be used in the production of cocoa and cashews. However, Embassy is not aware of any specific data or cases regarding child exploitative labor in producing these two goods. Embassy sources confirmed that there is no indication of forced labor or exploitative child labor in bauxite mines. Guinea is the primary producer of bauxite worldwide.

¶11. (U) Embassy is not aware of any organizations addressing forced adult labor in Guinea, and the government could not provide any information on the incidence of forced adult labor. There are few organizations working on exploitative child labor in Guinea, and very little data. Further research and focused studies are necessary in order to develop reliable statistics on the production of all of the goods mentioned in this cable - diamonds, gold, cashews, and cocoa.

COMBATING FORCED LABOR & EXPLOITATIVE CHILD LABOR

¶12. (U) Embassy is not aware of any government programs aimed to combat either forced labor or exploitative child labor. Save the Children is conducting programs focused on anti-trafficking and child labor throughout Guinea. USAID program officers visited Dialakoro and Bambeta (near the Guinean-Malian border) in February 2008 and reported that Save the Children has been effective in improving working condition and working hours for the children employed at the gold mines. Save the Children collaborates with authorities in Dialakoro to enforce maximum eight-hour shifts for children working in the gold mines. In Bambeta village, Save the Children organized members of the community to apply a "curfew" for children from their village working in the mines. The community members do not allow children to leave for work until 8:00 and all children must return to the village by 13:00.

CARTER